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PRESS RELEASE
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Alaska National Guard

By Sgt. Balinda O'Neal

Alaska Guardsmen compete in CrossFit Open

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — Service members from the Alaska Air and Army National Guard competed against approximately 140,000 worldwide participants to determine the "Fittest on Earth" during the CrossFit Open Feb. 27 through March 31.

The 22 Alaska Guardsmen and 10 Department of Defense civilians who competed in the competition are from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's 907 CrossFit program.

"The CrossFit Open is the starting point of the culmination of the CrossFit Games," said Sgt. Matt Johnson, a coach with 907 CrossFit and a member of the 208th Construction Management Team, Alaska Army National Guard. "We were ranked on five workouts over five weeks and the fittest 48 men, 48 women, and 30 teams from each region will earn invitations to one of the 17 regional events."

CrossFit is a functional fitness program that is designed based on constantly varied functional movements performed at relatively high intensity.

"The movements replicate and mimic life," Johnson said. "When you sit down in your chair, you are executing an air squat; when you pick something up from the ground, a deadlift."

The fitness regime developed by Coach Greg Classman, defines CrossFit as increased work capacity across broad time and modal domains.

"We really pride ourselves on the ability to move large loads over long distances quickly," Johnson said. "It lends itself very well to the military community by preparing you for the unknown and unknowable."

"There is no shortage of heart in this competition," he added. "Once you hear three, two, one, go, it's you and the whiteboard and the clock. Nothing is left on the table."

907 CrossFit conducted its first Workout of the Day, known as a WOD, in March of 2012 at Hangar 5 on JBER.

Since March 2012, 907 CrossFit has grown to almost 200 members. In November 2013 a new facility on Camp Carroll on JBER opened offering enough equipment to conduct classes of up to 25 personnel simultaneously.

"We hold three classes a day Monday through Friday, open to any Department of Defense cardholder," said Johnson. "It's a broad and inclusive fitness program that is scaled to meet

your physical and psychological tolerance. It's for anyone who wants to increase their fitness capacity."

CrossFit also fosters camaraderie by the community that spontaneously arises when people do these workouts together.

"A key component of why the program is so effective is the community aspect of everyone coming together to do some collective suffering," Johnson said. "There are high-fives and chest bumps at the end of the day, and everyone gets in a great workout."

With a new gym and almost 200 clients, it's a very exciting time for 907 CrossFit, Johnson added.

Participants chosen for the regional competition will be receiving invitations in the mail.

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Cutlines:

140321-Z-MW427-394

Sgt. Matt Blanchett, a fire support sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1-297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Alaska Army National Guard, power cleans 135 pounds during the 2014 CrossFit Open Workout 14.4 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson March 21. The CrossFit Open serves as a worldwide competition where athletes compete for slots in the annual CrossFit Games by submitting their scores online with either a video or validation by a CrossFit affiliate. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Edward Eagerton

140321-Z-MW427-157

State Command Sgt. Maj. Pam Harrington, Alaska Army National guard, completes a 60-calorie row during the 2014 CrossFit Open Workout 14.4 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, March 21. The CrossFit Open serves as a worldwide competition where athletes compete for slots in the annual CrossFit Games by submitting their scores online with either a video or validation by a CrossFit affiliate. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Edward Eagerton

140321-Z-MW427-484

Alaska Army National Guardsmen Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mark Nieto, property book officer, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, grades as 1st Lt. Danny Canlas, platoon leader, 207th Battlefield Support Company, performs the toes to bar exercise during the 2014 CrossFit Open Workout 14.4 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson March 21. The CrossFit Open serves as a worldwide competition where athletes compete for slots in the annual CrossFit Games by submitting their scores online with either a video or validation by a CrossFit affiliate. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Edward Eagerton

140321-Z-MW427-725

Alaska Army National Guardsmen 1st Lt. Danny Canlas, platoon leader, 207th Battlefield Support Company, grades as Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mark Nieto, property book officer, 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, power cleans 135 pounds during the 2014 CrossFit Open Workout 14.4 on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson March 21. The CrossFit Open serves as a worldwide competition where athletes compete for slots in the annual CrossFit Games by submitting their scores online with either a video or validation by a CrossFit affiliate. U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Edward Eagerton